



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Marketing and
Regulatory
Programs

Animal and Plant
Health Inspection
Service

Veterinary Services

National Veterinary
Services Laboratories
P.O. Box 844
Ames, IA 50010
(515) 663-7266
FAX (515) 663-7397

September 27, 2001

SUBJECT: Director's Memorandum Regarding Favoritism

TO: All NVSL Supervisors

BACKGROUND

One of the items identified as a concern by employees interviewed during the Civil Rights Compliance Review that was conducted by the Civil Rights Enforcement and Compliance (CREC) Staff in February 2001 related to favoritism. According to the draft CREC report, there is a perception that some managers and supervisors are less than objective in their relationships with their subordinates and that they show favoritism to particular subordinates in the following ways: inviting only selected employees to lunch or to break on a regular basis, mentoring only selected subordinates, supporting celebrations for the special occasions of only certain individuals, etc.

ISSUE

This is a management concern because, whether it is real or perceived, favoritism by managers and supervisors can have an adverse effect on employee morale and productivity. While personal relationships between employees are normally matters of individual choice and judgment, they become matters of organizational concern when they impede or have the potential to impede efficient operations of the organization. The ability of a supervisor to influence, directly or indirectly, assignments, promotions, training opportunities, awards, and other employment opportunities places the supervisor or manager in a visible position. When employee concerns related the types of behaviors referred to above (under BACKGROUND) are combined with perceptions of favoritism in connection with employment opportunities and actions (hiring, reassignments, selections for promotions, selections for training, disciplinary actions, etc.), complaints, grievances, and appeals can result. Time and effort spent processing and resolving complaints, grievances, and appeals can be very costly to an organization.



APHIS - Protecting American Agriculture
An Equal Opportunity Employer

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Favoritism was identified as a concern during the Civil Rights Compliance Review. Real or perceived, favoritism can adversely affect employee morale, productivity, and the efficiency and effectiveness of an organization. NVSL managers and supervisors should ensure that they relate to all subordinates in a professional, fair, and objective manner.

/s/ A. J. Davis

Arthur J. Davis
Acting Director

cc:
Janis Jarvis, APHIS/OA/CREC, Washington, DC
NVSL Employees